

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A respiratory mask, comprising:
a mask body comprising an interior surface and an exterior surface; and
an exhalation system including a ~~large number~~plurality of membrane elements
which are disposed as partially overlapping lamellas on the exterior surface of the mask body
and through which expired air can flow; and
an inhalation opening.
2. (Withdrawn) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane elements are designed as flow channels delimited by membrane strips.
3. (Withdrawn) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 2, wherein the flow channels are arranged in a matrix pattern on the mask body.
4. (Withdrawn) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane elements are designed as parallel membrane films which are provided with openings.
5. (Withdrawn) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 4, wherein the membrane films are connected to one another in the form of a multilayer woven fabric.
6. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane elements are designed in the form of bendable bars secured at one end.
7. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 6, wherein the bendable bars include securing positions lying in an overlap area of the membrane elements.
8. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane material is composed of a textile fabric or an elastomer.

9. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane material is selected from a group of materials which change their geometry as a result of electric fields.

10. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the membrane material is selected from a group of materials which change their spring rigidity as a result of electric fields.

11. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 9, wherein the material is a PVDF film.

12. (Currently Amended) ~~Use of a material which, as a result of~~ A method comprising applying an electric fields to the plurality of membrane elements of claim 1, wherein the individual membrane elements changes its geometry or spring rigidity upon application of the electric field; wherein the application of the electric field influences ~~in the region of the exhalation system of a protective respiratory mask as a flow resistance element for influencing the flow~~ resistance of expired air.

13. (New) The respiratory mask as claimed in claim 1, wherein the inhalation opening is adapted to be connected to a compressed gas source.